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THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A method for producing a coating or diffusion layer on a substrate for use in contact with a food product or beverage, said coating or diffusion layer preventing or inhibiting passage therethrough of flavour-active or odour-active compounds, and said method comprising applying to the surface of said substrate an effective amount of a copolymer comprising a flexible component and a retentive component, said flexible component being sufficiently flexible to allow the coated substrate to undergo compression and recovery and said retentive component being able to bind with or otherwise retain flavour-active or odour-active compounds.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein said substrate is a bottle closure, packaging or wrapping material, or a bottle or other container.

3. A method according to claim 1, wherein said substrate is a natural or synthetic cork, and said coating or diffusion layer prevents or inhibits passage of flavour-active or odour-active compounds from said cork to an alcoholic beverage in contact with said cork.

4. A method according to claim 3, wherein said flexible component is sufficiently flexible to allow the coated cork to be compressed and then to recover during a bottling process.

5. A method according to claim 1, wherein said flavour-active compounds are trichloroanisoles (TCA).

6. A method according to claim 1, wherein said copolymer is a graft, alternating or block copolymer.

7. A method according to claim 1,wherein said flexible component is formed from silicon-based monomers.

8. A method according to claim 1, wherein said copolymer is a polyvinylacetate (PVA) copolymer, a polyurethane copolymer or ionomer, a terephthalate copolymer, a styrene-acrylonitrile (SAN)/ acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene (ABS) copolymer, a (vinylidene) copolymer, an epoxy copolymer, an amide copolymer, a Bisphenol copolymer, a Bisphenol A (BPA) - epichlorohydrin copolymer, a poly (methyl) methacrylate copolymer, a poly(methacrylic acid) copolymer, a cellulose copolymer, a polyethylene vinyl alcohol copolymer, a silane copolymer or a siloxane copolymer.

9. A method according to claim 8, wherein said copolymer is a polyvinylacetate (PVA) copolymer.

10. A method according to claim 8, wherein said copolymer is a silane or siloxane copolymer, comprising polyethyleneglycol (PEG), isoprene, butadiene, lactone, amino, terephthalate, amino acid, heterocyclic, hydride (SiH), thiol or epoxy functionalities.

11. A coated substrate produced according to the method of any one of claims 1 to 10.

12. A coated cork produced according to the method of any one of claims 1 to 10.

13. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 10, substantially as described herein and with reference to any one of Examples 1 to 8.

14. A coated substrate according to claim 11, substantially as described herein and with reference to any one of Examples 1 to 8.

15. A coated cork according to claim 12, substantially as described herein and with reference to any one of Examples 1 to 8.